



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

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U.S. CHARGES IMMIGRATION SUPERVISOR
WITH FRAUD

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced today that LORETTA WILHITE, a supervisor, employed by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services ("CIS") (formerly known as the Immigration and Naturalization Service ("INS")), has been charged with falsifying CIS documents to enable an alien to obtain lawful permanent residency status, commonly known as a "green card."

According to the Complaint, WILHITE, as a Supervisory District Adjudications Officer, supervised several District Adjudications Officers ("DAO's") at CIS in New York City ("CIS/New York"). In July 2004, WILHITE allegedly requisitioned the file of an alien whose application had been denied by the CIS office in Kentucky ("CIS/Kentucky"). Documents in the alien's original file reflecting the denial by CIS/Kentucky had been altered with what appeared to be correction fluid and then stamped "approved" using an official CIS stamp assigned exclusively to one of WILHITE's subordinates. This CIS employee was on extended leave at the time, it is charged.

According to the Complaint, federal agents executed a search warrant at WILHITE's office and recovered the stamp. WILHITE was interviewed by agents and admitted that she "whited out" the denial entries on the alien's file and stamped "approved" on documents in the file knowing that the alien should not have been approved for a green card. WILHITE further admitted that she removed and shredded the original denial letter issued by CIS/Kentucky.

If convicted, WILHITE faces a maximum penalty of five years in prison and a fine of \$250,000.

WILHITE, 51, lives in Brooklyn.

Mr. GARCIA praised the investigative efforts of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General, for their work on this case. According to Mr. GARCIA, the investigation is continuing.

Assistant United States Attorney SERENE K. NAKANO is in charge of the prosecution.

The charges contained in the Complaint are merely accusations, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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